



2ND MINNESOTA BATTERY OF LIGHT ARTILLERY

Charles L. Mason

Charles was born in Evansville, Crawford County, Pennsylvania. Just when he came to Minnesota is something about which Charles neglected to leave any records, though it is known he was with at least his father. Charles was in Mantorville, Dodge County, in the fall of 1862 when he decided to enlist in the First Minnesota Mounted Rangers, Company H. His agreement was to serve with the Rangers for 12 months beginning November 2, 1862. Since Charles was only 19 years old at the time, his father, H. P. Mason, signed a note of permission to allow Charles to enlist and noted home as being in Wasojia, Minnesota. Charles joined his company in St. Peter, so it is unclear where in southeastern Minnesota he may actually have lived before the war.

The fall of 1862 was a time of turmoil in Minnesota because of a conflict with the Dakota Indians. Charles got caught up in that conflict and was away from the Rangers on a special detail "sent after Indians" in March and April of 1863. Charles served with the Rangers just a few days over his 12 months, being discharged on November 24, 1863. At the time of his discharge, he had a number of deductions to his final pay for items he possessed. He had been advanced \$56.62 in clothing in addition to owing for a revolver, a screw driver, and other small items of equipment.

A year later, the fall of 1864, a draft rendezvous at Fort Snelling was going on to fill the ranks of existing Minnesota units as well as raise new ones. Records indicate Charles enlisted a second time at Mantorville in Dodge County, Minnesota, but other records state he was credited to fill the draft quota in Vernon.

For his agreement to serve for one year in the Second Minnesota Battery, Charles received a bounty of \$100. He was given one third of the bounty upon enlistment with the balance due at a later date. The descriptive roll said Charles was a "21 years and 7/12 months" old farmer with blue eyes, light hair and a light complexion. He was 5', 11" tall. Charles had enlisted on September 3, but he was not mustered into the service until October 8 at Fort Snelling.

The last year of the war for the Battery was spent mostly in garrison with details of men sent off of various tasks. Charles was one of the men detailed to cut logs for the garrison on December 20, 1864. He remained on this detail until March 20, 1865, then stayed with the Battery until they were mustered out at Fort Snelling in August.

Charles left little trace of his life until he married Margery D. Arnold in Dodge County on June 26, 1872. Margery's maiden name leads to speculation if she might have been the sister of John Arnold, another member of the Second Minnesota Battery. John Arnold was also from Dodge County. Charles and John did not actually serve together as John was discharged before Charles joined, but being from the same county, they may have known each other.

By 1880, Charles and Margery were living at 1501 Adams Street in Minneapolis and Charles was working in the woods and saw mills. They had no children, but a boarder, a school teacher named Ellen Comey, lived with them.

Three years later on March 7, 1883, Kity Bell was born.

The 1888 Minneapolis Directory provided the Masons address as 1501 NE Adams Street in Minneapolis. The abbreviation "lab" appears in the listing as does "r" which usually meant the property was rented. The 1890-91 Directory shows a change a in occupation. Charles was working as a police officer. He was a member of the Grand Army of the Republic in Minneapolis, but he did not claim his service to the Battery. Rather, he listed his service with the Mounted Rangers.

Sometime in the next years, Charles applied for a pension and it was granted at the rate of \$6.00 a month. He received his last pension check on October 4, 1894. Cancer of the stomach and liver caused his death and it came on Christmas Eve,



1894. He was 51 years old.

Margery made arrangements for Charles to be buried in the Hillside Cemetery in Minneapolis and applied for a widow's pension for herself and for Kity.

Charles rests near a large family stone with a flat marker for each he and Margery.

Researched and compiled by the reenactors of the 2nd Minnesota Battery of Light Artillery. Visit our website at <http://www.2mnbattery.org> for more information about our soldiers and our organization.

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